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# THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL,

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## THE CITY OF THE LAKE.

On a fine morning in autumn, Billy Walsh emerged from the sheltering fence of elder and hawthorn that surrounded his father's white-walled house, which overtopped a green field that sloped gently to the bank of the romantic Daloo. He was equipped in a pair of smart pumps; at the knees of his corduroy small-clothes waved a flowing knot of ribbon. His coat was broad-cloth, and a new hat, lately purchased at Mitchelstown, rose above the curling yellow locks that shaded his forehead; while the accurate knot of his yellow grinder, proved that the time employed at the looking-glass had not been spent in vain. One hand was concealed in the left pocket of the small-clothes, and the right flourished a slender hazel twig, which, tradition taught him to believe, could put to flight all the powers of darkness, as St. Patrick made use of a hazel staff to expel every evil and venomous thing from the favoured island of his adoption.

From the evasive answers which Billy gave to his mother's inquiries concerning his afternoon excursion, and the more than usual attention bestowed on his dress, the inmates of the house suspected that he had some very particular affair on hands; and each furnished his own conjecture on the occasion. One supposed he was going to Mara's benefit dance, which was to take place that night; but then why should he set off so early? Another that Kitty Daly of the Commons, had a hand in the affair, else why should he turn out so gaily? A third, that he was certainly going to his uncle's at Broadford, to engage in the conquering goal to-morrow; but this sage remark was given to the winds, for he left his favourite *hurley* behind. The fact was, a few weeks before, he danced at the patron of Coolavoto with Peggy Noonan, a smiling blue-eyed girl, with fine auburn hair. The next Monday he attended and enjoyed the same satisfaction. In short, this blue-eyed dancer had taken such complete possession of his fancy, that he could neither work, nor eat, nor rest, with thinking of her pretty ankle and graceful air. Peggy was not altogether insensible to his passion, for on this evening she had promised to meet him, about a mile from her father's house, at the church-yard of Kilcorkeran.

Billy Walsh moved along with a light foot and elastic tread, whistling his favourite reel, "I wish I never saw you," and decapitating all the unfortunate thistles and wild flowers that grew to the right and left within range of his hazel plant. He left the town of Newmarket to the right, and struck across Barleyhill towards the ruined castle of Carrigcashel. As he crossed a brook that ran gurgling along its pebbly bed, he perceived the stream diverted into a narrow channel, which wound around the sloping side of the glen. At that time irrigation was unknown in this part of the country; and our *buckeen* considered the stream led to a *poteen still*. He pursued the water-course, which conducted him to a wretched and nearly roofless cabin, through every aperture of which the smoke issued, and rising, formed a beautiful blue column in the still air to a considerable height above. As he passed with silent tread over the heaps of grains that rose around, his farther progress was arrested by the appearance of a short, thick-set man; his broad shoulders and expansive chest, indicated considerable strength, his olive-complexioned face, embrowned with smoke, and shaded by enormous whiskers, displayed almost savage ferocity, while with a stern tone he demanded the stranger's business.

"My business is easily told," answered the other, unhesitatingly, "I'm cutting across the country to Coolavoto, and have followed the *strahane*, thinking it might lead me to a glass of poteen to help me across the hill."

"May be young man, you're come *spying* about what shouldn't consarn you, and"—

"Tut, tut! Falvey, leave off your *ramish*," said a man emerging from the smoke of the hovel, and whom Billy recognised as an old boon-companion, "Billy Walsh's father's son is not the boy to bring honest people to trouble, or give to say that any of his name ever turned spy to a blackguard gauger." The stern expression on Falvey's features now relaxed into a rugged smile, and grasping Walsh's hand, he cordially invited him to a glass of poteen.

Upon removing a stone from the wall of the hovel, they drew forth a small jar and a black wooden cup, that supplied the place of a glass. Then Falvey filled the cup, and after drinking to the health of the new comer, drained it dry. The cup was replenished and emptied in quick succession; and Billy Walsh was so taken with his new acquaintance, and the potent beverage which is loved alike throughout every grade in Ireland, from the peasant to the peer, and finds its way into the cellars of some commissioners of excise, flung such spells around him, that Peggy Noonan and the tristing-place at the old church of Kilcorkeran, were completely forgotten.

The shadows of tree and tower, were lengthening in the decline of the evening sun, as his engagement flashed across the mind of Billy Walsh. He lightly rose, and bid his companions farewell. He soon crossed the wood and gained the summit of the adjacent hill; the influence of the poteen, and the dread of missing his blue-eyed girl, added wings to his flight, but the sun was gone down, and the evening star twinkled bright in the west, before he reached Kilcorkeran. The burying ground was removed from the road and seated in the midst of extensive fields, and the dim twilight which was falling fast around, was not calculated to improve the sad and silent scene. He peeped over the stile that led into the lonely abode of the dead—he called Peggy Noonan in vain—the echoes of his voice, as they rose from the ivy-clad ruins of the old church, seemed to be unearthly tones mocking his eager call. The wild bird rushing from the sheltering thorn, and the hollow whistle of the autumnal night-blast along the tomb, shook his courage:—all the tales that superstition taught his childhood to believe, rushed upon his imagination. He wished himself far from this fearful church-yard; but the foolish hope of seeing Peggy Noonan, who doubtless, returned home displeased at his breach of promise, chained him to the spot; he sat down at the gateway, and after cursing Falvey, the poteen, and his own intemperate folly, fell fast asleep.

It is not recorded in his authentic story, how long Billy Walsh slept at the gateway of the church-yard, when he was roused by some one that called him by name. He fancied it was Peggy Noonan's voice; but great was his surprise to see an elderly gentleman on horseback, dressed in black, with cloth *leggings*; and his face shaded by a broad-brimmed beaver: "God save you Billy Walsh," says he, "what brings you to be fast asleep in so lonesome a spot, and so far from your own place at this hour of night." Billy Walsh rose, and taking off his hat, saluted the priest, for he knew him to be one from his dress, and because he carried the check wallet behind him, containing the vestment and holy utensils used in the celebration of mass; and which, until lately, the priests themselves conveyed from place to place as occasion required.

"I was waiting for a frind, plase your reverence, an' as the place was lonely an' quiet, I fell fast asleep; but I can't say how your reverence knows me, for I never placed my two-looking eyes on you afore." "I know more than you may imagine," said the stranger, "and

Billy if you left Falvey and the *poteen* in proper time, you need not disappoint Peggy Noonan, but I have a mass to read at 12 o'clock to-night at a distance from this, and I hope you will not refuse to act as clerk."

"Thunder and turf thin! begging your reverence's pardon, you ar'n't half so cute as you pretend, (or may be 'tis throwing it over me you are) not to know that Billy Walsh never received no learning, nor answered mass in his life. Besides, if I'm to be *coologue*, to straddle bare-backed behind your reverence, would destroy my new breeches."

"I warrant," said the priest, "that you can answer mass in style, and as to the breeches, we shall pass so smoothly along, that not a thread of it will suffer."

Reluctant to refuse his reverence, Billy Walsh mounted behind him; and the priest directed his course northward across the country, without let or hindrance from hedge or river, over which they glided like the morning mist, pursued by the early beams of the sun. Though our hopeful clerk sat quite at his ease, and altogether unshaken in his seat, he did not much relish this nocturnal ramble, and was never a professed admirer of early masses. So as they passed along by his uncle's place at Broadford, he endeavoured to fling himself off, but found that he was as it were, rivetted to the horse's back. He next attempted to cry out for assistance, but his tongue refused its wonted office, and like Virgil's hero, under nearly similar circumstances, *vox faucibus hæsit*. In the course of the night they reached Lough-guir, a romantic lake that expands its broad bosom a few miles below Bruff, and then shone a field of liquid silver beneath the mild influence of the lovely harvest moon. On reaching the bank, his companion bid Billy Walsh hold fast, and fear nothing. The first part of this advice was needless, for he held with might and main, his breath drawn in, and his teeth firmly set. The other he flung to the four winds of heaven, for on taking the fatal plunge, he mentally besought pardon for all his sins, and the help of every saint in the calendar, for he firmly believed that on reaching the bottom, all the cels of the lake would make a supper of his unfortunate carcase.

As the waters closed over their heads, Billy Walsh instead of instant suffocation, and the monstrous cels which his fears taught him to expect, was delighted to find they were travelling along a broad road shaded on each side with spreading trees, and approaching a fine town whose lamps glittered in the distance, like a multitude of bright stars. This town which consisted of one principal street, exceeded in beauty every idea that he had previously formed of splendid cities. All the windows were lighted, and the richly-dressed inhabitants thronged the street, as if it were some great festival. Upon reaching the centre of the street they stopped at a splendid church, at whose ample gate an immense crowd were pouring in. Our travellers also entered by the *sacristy*. Billy assisted the priest in *vesting*, laid the altar with great cleverness, and then taking his place at its lowest step, answered the mass from the *Introibo*, to the last verse of the *De Profundis*, with so much propriety and decorum as would have added credit to the best schoolmaster in Duballion. When all was concluded, and the check wallet had received its usual contents, the venerable priest turned round and addressed the congregation that crowded the long aisle, and the spacious gallery to the following effect:—

"My brethren, you have seen with what propriety and decorum Billy Walsh has acted the part of *clerk* at the holy service. We have been long endeavouring to procure a suitable person to fill that situation, and you all know how difficult it is to find one capable of discharging its duties properly. I hardly think the young man can have any objection to remain in this splendid city, and as his merits cannot be enhanced by any recommendation of mine, I am sure there is not an individual in the crowded assembly, but will be delighted to secure his services."

When the priest had ended, the walls of the lofty aisle resounded with the clapping of hands,—the gentlemen nodded assent—and the beautiful ladies waved their white handkerchiefs, that streamed like meteors of light

in the glare of the brilliant chandeliers, in token of approbation.

"You must be proud," said the clergyman, speaking to Billy Walsh, "you must be proud to find yourself such a favourite with all classes here, and especially the ladies. You shall have in this city every delight—the best eating and drinking—lovely ladies to dance with—and hurling matches to your heart's content. Stay with us Billy Walsh;—I know you are too sensible to throw away your good luck."

"I have given my hand an' word to mind *cool* at the hurling-match on the common to-morrow evening; and more than that, I wouldn't part Peggy Noonan for all the gold of Damer."

The gentlemen entreated,—the beautiful ladies wept,—and the priest promised that he should have Peggy Noonan with him to-morrow night. He continued as unyielding as the savage rock, round whose brow the winds of heaven rage, and upon whose changeless base the ocean pours its thousand waves in vain. "He would be no *clerk* at all at all."

In short, the obstinate Billy Walsh was driven amid groans of disapprobation from the church into the street, and pursued with shouts and yells of anger along the avenue which led to the border of the lake. On arriving thither, a fearful whirlwind caught him up like a straw, and hurled him ashore. The dark waters of the troubled lake rose in angry waves, and the reeds of its sedgy borders waved mournfully to the breeze of the gray morning; as Billy Walsh arose, and pursued his way homewards, giving at every step, his hearty curse to all young men, who, ever again, would form assignations at lonely church yards.

E. W.

## THE DEATH OF ADA.

THE story on which the following poem is founded, may be seen at large in Walker's memoirs of the Irish bards, page 32, and also, in Vol. 1st of the Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin, page 48, note. It contains an affecting example of the fidelity of the ancient Irish bards to their chiefs.

The spirit of the evening sighs  
And wakes aerial symphonies

In Eman's (1) leafy bowers.

Light sails the shadowy mist afar,  
Athward the golden western star,

The radiant bow of showers

Is bent where Alba's (2) breezes stray,  
Pursuing ocean's airy spray.

Who moves on Bera's (3) rocky height,  
With form as fair, and step as light

As summer's morn and gale?

'Tis Ada, (4) flower of Alba's clime

Fair theme of many a song sublime

In woody Inisfail.

Swift from the dewy plain below

A son of song in robes of snow,

As in the day of war, (5)

Ascends the cliff; and drawing nigh

The pensive fair whose sapphire eye

Gazed on the vesper star.

While o'er his harp the eve-winds stray,

He sigh'd, and thus began his lay:

"From Cara's (6) distant land I come,

Where late within my echoing home

The sounds of joy arose:

Famed were my race on battle field;

My chieftain was his people's shield—

A whirlwind to his foes.

"Fair was his blue-eyed bride—more fair

Than the bright forms that on the air

Of silent morn-tide sail,\*

Like shadows of the breeze that pass

\* The reader will bear in mind, that the events of this poem are supposed to have taken place in an age when the belief of fairies and aerial beings was universal.

Along the hills of wavy grass  
 She bounded through the vale :  
 But she was false—her secret smile  
 Beam'd on the chief of Dunscaí's (7) isle.  
 "The warriors of the red-branch (8) came—  
 The son of the devouring flame  
 'Rose from my fathers' towers,  
 My chief was slain; and distant far,  
 His bride was borne ere morning's star  
 Led on the rose-wing'd hours.  
 "And all the race of Lasa (9) fell,  
 Their bard alone remains to tell  
 The sad and fearful tale;  
 The lonely thistle marks the place  
 Where once the music of the chase  
 'Rose on the twilight gale :'  
 Last of my race,—alone I stand,  
 Sad—friendless—in a distant land."  
 "Oh stranger! mournful is thy tale!"  
 Exclaimed the fair, and ashy pale,  
 And tremulous she grew.  
 As Dian when her rayless crest  
 Receding in the distant west  
 Fades dim upon the view.  
 "Pretended spouse of Ullin's (10) lord,  
 For this, I fled the spoiler's sword,"  
 The vengeful bard replied ;  
 'For this, have I survived the hour,  
 When thou didst fly from Cara's tower,  
 And Lasa's warriors died.  
 That thou and I might find one grave  
 Beneath yon silent, rolling wave.  
 "Night's watch is set—day lingers yet  
 Where evening's clouds and star have met,  
 But while I speak, 'tis gone.  
 So brief thy life—so brief my strife  
 With all beneath the sun."  
 He seized the fair—her soft dark hair  
 Floated like mist in evening's air,  
 As headlong down the steep  
 The brave avenger of his race  
 Leap'd with his prize—then sunk apace  
 In everlasting sleep.  
 The viewless wanderers of the airy hill†  
 Poured their lone death-song o'er the ocean still. (11)

IOTA.

(1) Emain, Emhain, or Emania, the residence of the ancient kings of Ulster.

(2) By Alba, is meant Albion or Scotland. Mr. Theophilus O'Flanagan in his notes on the beautiful Irish story of Deirdri, says, that the nominative case is *Alba*, and not *Alban*, which is the dative.

(3) Bera, or more properly Rinchin Bera, was a rock near Emania, which overhung a deep precipice, and commanded an extensive prospect.

(4) Ada of Albion, called in Irish *Blanaid*, lived in the first century of the Christian era, in the reign of Concovar Mac Nessa. She was the wife of Cara, or Caraidh, otherwise called Conrigh, a chief of the south, who had won her in single combat from the celebrated Cuchullan. But she loved the northern chief, and formed a plan for escaping with him, which proved fatal to her husband and all his tribe, except the bard, whose name was Fercart.

(5) White flowing garments seem to have been particularly worn by the ancient bards when they attended their chiefs to the wars.

(6) Cara, or Conrigh, according to some writers, was king of Munster; but others, as I should think more correctly, say that he was only chief of a considerable district in Kerry.

(7) Some Scottish writers say that Cuchullan was chief of Dunscaí, or Dun-sgathach, (i. e. the fortress of Sgathach) in the isle of Sky. This opinion may have arisen from the circumstance of his having at one time married a lady who was a native of that place. The authority which he seems to have possessed in the island in consequence of that marriage, may warrant the appellation. It does not follow from this, however, that he was not a native of Ireland.

(8) The warriors of the red branch were according to the Irish annalists, an order of knights to which Cuchullan is said to have belonged. A considerable part of the palace of Emania is said, to have been occupied by them, and was on that account denominated *Teagh na Craíbh-madh*, i. e. the place of the red branch. The place where Cuchullan crossed the Shannon in his expedition against Cara or Conrigh, is still called in Irish *Léim Conchulainn*, i. e. the leap of Cuchullan, in allusion, as I should suppose, to the rapidity with which he and his people crossed the river.

(9) The dwelling of Cara was situated near a stream, called in the Irish tongue *Finn-glaise*, i. e. "The fair rivulet" which the author has called "Lasa," for the sake both of metre and euphony, a practice fully justified by precedent in poems or translations, where Gaelic names occur.

(10) Ullin was the ancient name of Ulster; the title of "Ullin's Lord," given to Cuchullan, is in some measure warranted, both by the great authority which he possessed in that province, and the etymology of his name.

(11) Some say that they were dashed to pieces among the rocks, but in the transactions of the Gaelic Society, the catastrophe is described precisely as above.

† The breeze.

## MELTS OF THE HORSE.

It can hardly have escaped the observation of any one, that on the legs of the horse are four rough, warty excrescences, one on each. We have heard, we know not how truly, that physiologists are utterly at a loss as to assigning any use or object to them, they have thus therefore been unnoticed in all accounts hitherto published of the Natural History of the animal. Indeed, our own attention was called to the matter recently, by the question having been propounded to ourselves, not long ago, whether we could give any information on the subject. Being unwilling to admit our ignorance, we said we would think about it; and having thus gained time, we went slyly to consult our farrier; but he could tell us nothing, save that they are called melts; and are, as he expresses it, "on every horse that ever was foaled; and whenever there's a horse that hasn't them, he's called a Whitsuntide colt;" which he explained to me as a colt foaled at Whitsuntide; at the same time, he declared, that in the course of his experience he had never met with such a one; that they are not without their purpose is shown by their being invariably found on every horse, and precisely in the same position on the inside of each leg; on the fore legs, a little above the joint which answers to the human wrist, and in the hind legs, just below the joint corresponding with an ancle. It is true, that in high-bred horses they sometimes almost disappear, or are so extremely small as hardly to be observable, except when sought for; while on draught horses, and others of a coarser breed, they are occasionally so large as two inches and a half long, and more than one in breadth. Certain it is, that He who has made nothing in vain, had some view to their utility when he formed the animal; and we shall be glad to receive information on the subject from any of our friends who have given their attention to the structure of the horse.

We happened to speak some time since about them to an intelligent friend, who, unable to solve the difficulty otherwise than by raising another, asked us what was the use of the nipple on the breast of the male of many tribes of animals, and among the rest of the human species. We replied by citing the curious, but well authenticated fact in physiology, that a man has been known to give suck to a child; but our friend alleged truly, that no solitary instance of this kind, contrary to the usual course of nature, could fairly be relied on, as showing the purpose of a particular formation; and added, that he should suppose they were so placed by our Creator, just as a judicious architect places niches or other ornaments to break the uniformity of a long vacant space in a building. This, however, is rather a fanciful notion, than a rational solution; the fact being, as we conceive, that they are simply an imperfect formation, intended to preserve a certain degree of outward similarity of appearance between the sexes.

With regard to the horse's melts, we have nothing further to say, save that the only use which we have ever known the animal to make of them, was in scratching his head, and especially his ears, as he is accustomed to do when at liberty, against those which grow on his fore legs.

B.

## RAZORS.

The fineness of the edge of a razor is by most people injured or destroyed by the use of the strop, so that they never can shave with any ease or comfort. The hone or razor stone ought to be kept constantly moist with oil. When the razor has been finely honed, it should never be suffered to touch any thing, but the cheapest and best razor strop ever invented. This is not a piece of calf leather, prepared with paste or emery powder, nor any other composition, however celebrated by patent or otherwise, to roughen and hack the edge of the razor, and make it about equally fit for shaving as a butcher's knife, or a carpenter's hatchet. The best strop ever invented is the hand, moistened with its natural oil—a strop which will fine the edge of your razor beyond conception, if you are careful to let it touch nothing else except the hone. To obtain the full advantage of it, however, it will be necessary not to be sparing of your labour.